Privatisation of Port activities

3045. SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA:
SHRI N. GIRI PRASAD:

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering a proposal to privatise port activities in the country;

(b) whether it is a fact that the Bombay Port Trust has already allotted a container berth to American President Lines, the US Shipping major; and

(c) if so, the details and what are the other ports proposed to be allotted to private parties?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) Yes, Sir. Keeping in view the liberalised policy, the Government welcome schemes for privatisation of port activities.

(b) No, Sir. The Bombay Port has not yet allotted any container berth to the American President Lines.

(c) Schemes of each Port will have to be examined on its merits.

Construction of Express Highway between Delhi and Chandigarh

3046. SHRI S. S. SURJEWALA: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a proposal under Government's consideration to construct an Express Highway between Delhi and Chandigarh, if so, the details thereof;

(b) by when the four-laning of G. T. Road from Delhi to Ambala is likely to be completed;

(c) whether there is a proposal to convert National Highway from Delhi to Ferozepur via Rohtak, Hissar, Sirsa into four-laning, if so, what is the time schedule; and

(d) whether Government propose to declare inter-State Highway into a National Highway, between Delhi, Rohtak, Jind, Narwana, Paren and Ludhiana and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Delhi to Murthal Section of Delhi-Ambala National Highway is already 4 lane wide. Work of 4 laning Murthal-Karnal Section is in progress. Work on Karnal to Ambala Section is yet to start.

(c) Delhi-Bahadurgarh Section of Delhi-Rohtak-Sirsa National Highway is already 4 lane. The Section from Bahadurgarh to Rohtak has been included for 4 laning in the Eighth Plan. It has not been possible to include the remaining section from Rohtak to Sirsa for 4 laning in 8th Plan due to resource constraints.

(d) No, Sir.

Probe into Mishap of "Vaishva Mohini"

3047. SHRIMATI CHANDRIKA ABHINANDAN JAIN: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the high-powered fact finding committee constituted to go into the circumstances leading to the floundering of Shipping Corporation of India Vessel "Vishva Mohini" in the sea, off the coast of Spain has submitted its report;

(b) if so, the details of the report indicating therein the fixing of the responsibility for any lapse;

(c) the amount of compensation paid to each of the survivors and to the next of kin of those dead or missing; and

(d) the steps Government propose to take to avoid such kind of mishap?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) and (b) No high-powered fact finding Committee has been constituted. However, the Govt. of India had ordered a preliminary enquiry into the incident in accordance with Merchant Shipping Act. On the basis of the Preliminary report, an application has been moved before the Metropolitan Magistrate, Bombay for conducting formal investigation. Hearing of the case is yet to commence.

(c) In consonance with the bi-partite agreement between the SCI and the respective Unions, the quantum of compensation will be in the range of Rs. 11.69 lacs to Rs. 5.50 lacs for officer, Rs. 3,22,910 to 2,08,718 for crew and Rs. 4.25 lacs for petty officer.

(d) All sea-going ships are surveyed at least once every year by the Mercantile Marine Department and the Classification Societies to